

CENTER FOR DISABILITY ACCESS  
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UNITED STATES DISTRICT COURT  
NORTHERN DISTRICT OF CALIFORNIA

**Scott Johnson**

Plaintiff,

v.

**Rustic 94022, Inc**, a California  
Corporation

Defendants.

**Case No.**

**Complaint For Damages And  
Injunctive Relief For Violations  
Of: Americans With Disabilities  
Act; Unruh Civil Rights Act**

Plaintiff Scott Johnson complains of Rustic 94022, Inc, a California Corporation; and alleges as follows:

**PARTIES:**

1. Plaintiff is a California resident with physical disabilities. Plaintiff is a level C-5 quadriplegic. He cannot walk and also has significant manual dexterity impairments. He uses a wheelchair for mobility and has a specially equipped van.

2. Defendant Rustic 94022, Inc owned Rustic House Oyster Bar & Grill located at or about 295 Main St, Los Altos, California, between March 2021 and May 2021.

1       3. Defendant Rustic 94022, Inc owns Rustic House Oyster Bar & Grill  
2 ("Restaurant") located at or about 295 Main St, Los Altos, California,  
3 currently.

4       4. Plaintiff does not know the true names of Defendants, their business  
5 capacities, their ownership connection to the property and business, or their  
6 relative responsibilities in causing the access violations herein complained of,  
7 and alleges a joint venture and common enterprise by all such Defendants.  
8 Plaintiff is informed and believes that each of the Defendants herein is  
9 responsible in some capacity for the events herein alleged, or is a necessary  
10 party for obtaining appropriate relief. Plaintiff will seek leave to amend when  
11 the true names, capacities, connections, and responsibilities of the Defendants  
12 are ascertained.

13  
14       **JURISDICTION & VENUE:**

15       5. The Court has subject matter jurisdiction over the action pursuant to 28  
16 U.S.C. § 1331 and § 1343(a)(3) & (a)(4) for violations of the Americans with  
17 Disabilities Act of 1990, 42 U.S.C. § 12101, et seq.

18       6. Pursuant to supplemental jurisdiction, an attendant and related cause  
19 of action, arising from the same nucleus of operative facts and arising out of  
20 the same transactions, is also brought under California's Unruh Civil Rights  
21 Act, which act expressly incorporates the Americans with Disabilities Act.

22       7. Venue is proper in this court pursuant to 28 U.S.C. § 1391(b) and is  
23 founded on the fact that the real property which is the subject of this action is  
24 located in this district and that Plaintiff's cause of action arose in this district.

25  
26       **FACTUAL ALLEGATIONS:**

27       8. Plaintiff went to the Restaurant in March 2021 and May 2021 with the  
28 intention to avail himself of its goods or services motivated in part to

1 determine if the defendants comply with the disability access laws. Not only  
2 did Plaintiff personally encounter the unlawful barriers in March 2021 and  
3 May 2021, but he wanted to return and patronize the business again but was  
4 specifically deterred due to his actual personal knowledge of the barriers  
5 gleaned from his encounter with them.

6 9. The Restaurant is a facility open to the public, a place of public  
7 accommodation, and a business establishment.

8 10. Unfortunately, on the date of the plaintiff's visit, the defendants failed  
9 to provide wheelchair accessible outside dining surfaces in conformance with  
10 the ADA Standards as it relates to wheelchair users like the plaintiff.

11 11. The Restaurant provides dining surfaces to its customers but fails to  
12 provide any wheelchair accessible outside dining surfaces.

13 12. A couple of problems that plaintiff encountered was the lack of  
14 sufficient knee or toe clearance under the outside dining surfaces for  
15 wheelchair users. Additionally, other outside dining surfaces were too high.

16 13. Plaintiff believes that there are other features of the dining surfaces that  
17 likely fail to comply with the ADA Standards and seeks to have fully compliant  
18 dining surfaces for wheelchair users.

19 14. On information and belief, the defendants currently fail to provide  
20 wheelchair accessible dining surfaces.

21 15. These barriers relate to and impact the plaintiff's disability. Plaintiff  
22 personally encountered these barriers.

23 16. As a wheelchair user, the plaintiff benefits from and is entitled to use  
24 wheelchair accessible facilities. By failing to provide accessible facilities, the  
25 defendants denied the plaintiff full and equal access.

26 17. The failure to provide accessible facilities created difficulty and  
27 discomfort for the Plaintiff.

28 18. The defendants have failed to maintain in working and useable

1 conditions those features required to provide ready access to persons with  
2 disabilities.

3 19. The barriers identified above are easily removed without much  
4 difficulty or expense. They are the types of barriers identified by the  
5 Department of Justice as presumably readily achievable to remove and, in fact,  
6 these barriers are readily achievable to remove. Moreover, there are numerous  
7 alternative accommodations that could be made to provide a greater level of  
8 access if complete removal were not achievable.

9 20. Plaintiff will return to the Restaurant to avail himself of its goods or  
10 services and to determine compliance with the disability access laws once it is  
11 represented to him that the Restaurant and its facilities are accessible. Plaintiff  
12 is currently deterred from doing so because of his knowledge of the existing  
13 barriers and his uncertainty about the existence of yet other barriers on the  
14 site. If the barriers are not removed, the plaintiff will face unlawful and  
15 discriminatory barriers again.

16 21. Given the obvious and blatant nature of the barriers and violations  
17 alleged herein, the plaintiff alleges, on information and belief, that there are  
18 other violations and barriers on the site that relate to his disability. Plaintiff will  
19 amend the complaint, to provide proper notice regarding the scope of this  
20 lawsuit, once he conducts a site inspection. However, please be on notice that  
21 the plaintiff seeks to have all barriers related to his disability remedied. See  
22 *Doran v. 7-11*, 524 F.3d 1034 (9th Cir. 2008) (holding that once a plaintiff  
23 encounters one barrier at a site, he can sue to have all barriers that relate to his  
24 disability removed regardless of whether he personally encountered them).

25  
26 **I. FIRST CAUSE OF ACTION: VIOLATION OF THE AMERICANS**  
27 **WITH DISABILITIES ACT OF 1990** (On behalf of Plaintiff and against all  
28 Defendants.) (42 U.S.C. section 12101, et seq.)

1       22. Plaintiff re-pleads and incorporates by reference, as if fully set forth  
2 again herein, the allegations contained in all prior paragraphs of this  
3 complaint.

4       23. Under the ADA, it is an act of discrimination to fail to ensure that the  
5 privileges, advantages, accommodations, facilities, goods and services of any  
6 place of public accommodation is offered on a full and equal basis by anyone  
7 who owns, leases, or operates a place of public accommodation. See 42 U.S.C.  
8 § 12182(a). Discrimination is defined, inter alia, as follows:

- 9           a. A failure to make reasonable modifications in policies, practices,  
10           or procedures, when such modifications are necessary to afford  
11           goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, or  
12           accommodations to individuals with disabilities, unless the  
13           accommodation would work a fundamental alteration of those  
14           services and facilities. 42 U.S.C. § 12182(b)(2)(A)(ii).
- 15           b. A failure to remove architectural barriers where such removal is  
16           readily achievable. 42 U.S.C. § 12182(b)(2)(A)(iv). Barriers are  
17           defined by reference to the ADA Standards.
- 18           c. A failure to make alterations in such a manner that, to the  
19           maximum extent feasible, the altered portions of the facility are  
20           readily accessible to and usable by individuals with disabilities,  
21           including individuals who use wheelchairs or to ensure that, to the  
22           maximum extent feasible, the path of travel to the altered area and  
23           the bathrooms, telephones, and drinking fountains serving the  
24           altered area, are readily accessible to and usable by individuals  
25           with disabilities. 42 U.S.C. § 12183(a)(2).

26       24. When a business provides dining surfaces, it must provide accessible  
27 dining surfaces.

28       25. Here, accessible dining surfaces have not been provided in

1 conformance with the ADA Standards.

2 26. The Safe Harbor provisions of the 2010 Standards are not applicable  
3 here because the conditions challenged in this lawsuit do not comply with the  
4 1991 Standards.

5 27. A public accommodation must maintain in operable working condition  
6 those features of its facilities and equipment that are required to be readily  
7 accessible to and usable by persons with disabilities. 28 C.F.R. § 36.211(a).

8 28. Here, the failure to ensure that the accessible facilities were available  
9 and ready to be used by the plaintiff is a violation of the law.

10  
11 **II. SECOND CAUSE OF ACTION: VIOLATION OF THE UNRUH CIVIL**  
12 **RIGHTS ACT** (On behalf of Plaintiff and against all Defendants.) (Cal. Civ.  
13 Code § 51-53.)

14 29. Plaintiff repleads and incorporates by reference, as if fully set forth  
15 again herein, the allegations contained in all prior paragraphs of this  
16 complaint. The Unruh Civil Rights Act (“Unruh Act”) guarantees, inter alia,  
17 that persons with disabilities are entitled to full and equal accommodations,  
18 advantages, facilities, privileges, or services in all business establishment of  
19 every kind whatsoever within the jurisdiction of the State of California. Cal.  
20 Civ. Code §51(b).

21 30. The Unruh Act provides that a violation of the ADA is a violation of the  
22 Unruh Act. Cal. Civ. Code, § 51(f).

23 31. Defendants’ acts and omissions, as herein alleged, have violated the  
24 Unruh Act by, inter alia, denying, or aiding, or inciting the denial of, Plaintiff’s  
25 rights to full and equal use of the accommodations, advantages, facilities,  
26 privileges, or services offered.

27 32. Because the violation of the Unruh Civil Rights Act resulted in difficulty,  
28 discomfort or embarrassment for the plaintiff, the defendants are also each

1 responsible for statutory damages, i.e., a civil penalty. (Civ. Code § 55.56(a)-  
2 (c).)

3 33. Although the plaintiff encountered frustration and difficulty by facing  
4 discriminatory barriers, even manifesting itself with minor and fleeting  
5 physical symptoms, the plaintiff does not value this very modest physical  
6 personal injury greater than the amount of the statutory damages.  
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12 **PRAYER:**

13 Wherefore, Plaintiff prays that this Court award damages and provide  
14 relief as follows:

15 1. For injunctive relief, compelling Defendants to comply with the  
16 Americans with Disabilities Act and the Unruh Civil Rights Act. Note: the  
17 plaintiff is not invoking section 55 of the California Civil Code and is not  
18 seeking injunctive relief under the Disabled Persons Act at all.

19 2. For equitable nominal damages for violation of the ADA. See  
20 *Uzuegbunam v. Preczewski*, --- U.S. ---, 2021 WL 850106 (U.S. Mar. 8, 2021)  
21 and any other equitable relief the Court sees fit to grant.

22 3. Damages under the Unruh Civil Rights Act, which provides for actual  
23 damages and a statutory minimum of \$4,000 for each offense.

24 4. Reasonable attorney fees, litigation expenses and costs of suit, pursuant  
25 to 42 U.S.C. § 12205; and Cal. Civ. Code §§ 52.  
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1 Dated: June 4, 2021

CENTER FOR DISABILITY ACCESS

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3 By: \_\_\_\_\_



4 Amanda Seabock, Esq.  
5 Attorney for plaintiff  
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